CHAPTER 1

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR VILLAGE

000 WINTER had begun. The first snow of the year had fallen. It covered the muddy streets of the village, softening the nakedness of the fruit trees which stood lonely in the bare yards. The wind from Mount Vitosha came whistling down the empty lanes, sending both man and beast to seek protection and warmth. The animals huddled in their thatched folds and shelters; the women and children crowded on the little stools near the fireplace at home. The fall sowing of wheat was in. The fields, wind-swept and snow-laden, were deserted, seemingly forgotten by the men and women who had spent so much time with them during the past months.

512 231 One ordinary day followed another. Every morning the water buffalo had to be groomed until they shone; the oxen had to be cleaned after the night in the dirty stall; these, as well as the sheep, had to be fed. Usually the animals received their meager rations before ten [291] o'clock. Shortly thereafter the men, wearing their dirty-gray sheepskin coats, their brimless lambskin hats, and their pigskin sandals, congregated at the taverns to relieve the monotony of their daily routine. At noon they plodded home to a lunch of beans, looked after the cattle once more, and gave commands to their womenfolk. The rest of the day was spent at the taverns in drinking and talking, interspersed with long, easy silences. After the evening meal, the cattle were fed again. Then the men dropped off to sleep along with the rest of the household.

● 181 829 The winds and enforced idleness of winter were not alone responsible for the apparent sluggishness on every hand. Slow motion was characteristic of Dragalevtsy life in general, but especially of the bodily movements of the people. *Ima vreme* (there's ~~plenty~~ of time) was either a practical philosophical tenet which explained their lack of hurry or else it was an expression frequently used to rationalize their casual manner. I never saw a peasant with a watch.

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000 of the milkmen began at once to retrace the long uphill journey from the city's outskirts to the village.

576 Sometimes I overtook these men outside the village and fell in with them.[1] *"Dobra stiga"* ("Well-reached"), I said; and they answered, *"Dal ti bog dobro"* ("God has given you good"). The [822] amenities observed, I then asked about other matters. "How far is it from Sofia to your village?" Always the answer came in terms of "walking hours" and never in kilometers, the accepted measure of distance in Bulgaria. When we would encounter those going in the opposite direction we stopped our conversation long enough to say, *"Dobra sreshta"* ("Well-met"). When I chanced to inquire about the size of Dragalevtsy, the usual answer was, "About three [161] hundred houses." If I wanted to know how many inhabitants this would mean, I multiplied the figure by five, the size of the average household. (The difference between this crude estimate of fifteen hundred and the 1934 census figures of 1,669 persons meant little to the peasant.)

000 No, Dragalevtsy was in no sense of the word a large village, as Sofia savants used to point out to me when they asked where I saw material enough there for a book. Theirs was the loss. An old village with more than sixteen hundred people teems with life. The stuff of which its days are made is rich and lasting; the intricate crisscross of vigorous personalities and deep-rooted folkways proved a never-ending drama for which nature usually provided a superb setting.

788 The meadows were lush from the spring rains, some of the fruit
● 181 trees were in bloom, numberless tiny silver streams spread a glittering net down the side of Vitosha, and a veil of green leaves lay over all the red roofs of the village. Against such a background, a group of peasants made ready for their pilgrimage to Rila Monastery. Such an occasion was as truly an outpouring of joy as was the departure of the Canterbury pilgrims in Chaucer's day. The clanging of the church bell summoned the friends and relatives of the departing pilgrims to the incense-filled church. Inside, before the iconostas, dark and gilt, the priest read a prayer and led the little flock of people to the edge of the village, to the beginning of the outside world, where the

[1] [i.e. milkman delivering their milk to Sofia -- Analyst]

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travelers, dressed in their brightest, newest garments, were speeded on their way. The friends and relatives loaded them with money and presents of clothing, food, and wool, which the pilgrims were to donate to the great and holy monastery. The whole ceremony of leave-taking was made a part of the bright landscape by the flowers everywhere—on the dress of the pilgrims, fastened to the gifts, and carried in huge bunches. Upon their return a few days later the dusty pilgrims were met at the outskirts of the village and escorted home through the blue twilight by those eager to hear of every adventure during the days and nights in the great mountains, whose jagged walls have protected Rila Monastery for hundreds of years.

Formal piety, as shown in pilgrimages, was only one of the major characteristics which these Bulgarian villagers possessed. The Dragalevtsy people, especially the men, were predominantly literate. Bulgaria, despite what seems a forbidding Cyrillic alphabet, has the highest rate of literacy of all Balkan countries, a fact which can be attributed to the tendency to regard education as a panacea for individual and social ills. While only 44 per cent of the women over fifteen years of age could read and write, 92 per cent of the men were literate. Of course, I often came upon groups of peasants crowded around a friend slowly spelling out a newspaper article aloud, but these little clusters of attentive listeners originated because of the scarcity of newspaper subscribers, not necessarily because of illiteracy.

The Dragalevtsy people were also law-abiding. During the first three years I knew the village, and informants said that the record went much farther back than that, no Dragalevtsy peasant had been taken to Sofia for imprisonment. There was no local jail, nor any need for one. This was not a sign of the inefficiency of local police, but rather an indication of the peaceable and honest traits of the people.

In many other characteristics the villagers shared what have come to be known as the universal "rural virtues," for theirs was an agrarian way of life. More than three-fourths of the family heads were peasant proprietors. In addition to these, there were two other occupational groups: the intellectuals and the artisans. Despite their small number, the intelligentsia, as they were called by the peasants, were the most influential group in the community. Whenever the

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stopanin, or male head of the house, killed the cock and held its twitching body over a bag of grain seed so that several drops of blood would fall upon it. He then drove slowly to the field to prepare the ground for the sowing, meanwhile eagerly awaiting the arrival at midmorning of the *domakinya,* his wife, dressed in her most beautiful costume and bearing a pan containing the boiled cock, meal, and bread. The family group made a tour once around the field, whereupon the man solemnly broke the bread and, before sitting with the others in the middle of the field to feast, gave pieces of the bread to the oxen. The peasants called this the "sweetest meal of the year" and delighted in having friends from a neighboring field join them in the repast. Summer's hard work was at an end; the harvests were plentiful; the peasants were deeply grateful.

Life in these scattered fields of Dragalevtsy was hard and laborious, but to the peasant, life without the fields would not be worth living, for these narrow strips of land were his children growing under his painstaking care. The land was his companion and friend, as he shared with it the thoughts and dreams of a starlit summer night, with a cloak for a pillow and dew for a blanket. Land meant more to the peasant than money in the bank; it meant more than food on the table; it meant life itself.

Some years ago I heard a Sofia University professor say in a lecture that the Bulgarian peasant was more devoted to his work than to his religion. "There are more songs dedicated to labor than to saints," he added. Because I wondered about the truth of this statement in respect to Dragalevtsy, I polled village opinion. Here are some of the questions I asked, with representative or characteristic responses:

Nowadays, which do people enjoy most: working in the field or sitting in the tavern?

"People work to get bread. They can't earn money enough to save. Some prefer to work in the fields because we quarrel when we are in the *kruchma.*"

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275 461 181 "Most of the people prefer to be in the tavern, though there are some who go there to do *pazarluk* [arrange a business deal], drink a little, then leave to do their work again."

"I prefer to work in the fields than to sit in the tavern."

463 181 *Why do young people want to become artisans and do not want to become farmers?*

"They want easier work. Field work is heavy. If they work inside, they will live longer, the wind won't beat in their faces, they won't remain in the cold."

"It's better to work inside than out in the weather."

"If one is an artisan, one won't become hungry. There will always be work to do. But in the fields things are not so sure. Work is easier as an artisan than as a farmer. The money is only of minor importance."

461 181 *Do people of Dragalevtsy, like the heroes of old folk songs, love hard work more than easy work?*

"They prefer easy work. Fifty years ago people liked the harder work, for there were few occupations. Now parents don't control their children. A son sees his father at one tavern and he goes to the other. If his father comes to the second tavern, then he goes back to the first. Formerly people had big fields and had to do much work. They prided themselves on the amount of work they could get done. They were healthier, because they didn't smoke and drink so much. The one who could work the most was the most honored. Now the fields are small. There is little work to do in them, and so people get out of the habit of working hard."

"They like easier work now. Everyone looks for something that is light. It was not so fifty years ago, but the change came about especially since the war."

"They love easy work. Formerly there were more animals, more fields, less people, and therefore more work."

556 181 *With what adjective would a Dragalevtsy peasant prefer to be described: industrious, rich, influential, wise?*

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"Now all want to be rich and will lie to become so. There is no one who wants to be industrious. They sit in the tavern and say, 'Let those who are foolish work.' There is no shame nowadays. Formerly a man was ashamed to be seen away from his work. Furthermore, people prefer to be influential than wise."

"People would rather be rich, but think it necessary to be industrious in order to be rich. It is better to be influential than wise."

When I pursued the attitude toward money by further questioning I received such replies as these:

"When I was young I could work and get money, but now I can't, so therefore I think more about it. I sent my son to be a soldier and have to do everything all alone."

"Prices are now higher, money doesn't go so far, and therefore has to be watched carefully. Formerly people didn't have to buy so much. Now there are many who want to get more and more money."

The position of the wealthy man was described as follows:

"Rich men have lots of influence, even more than the priest. The priest is a good man and people listen to his advice, but when they go to Trayko Danev [a wealthy peasant] they take off their hat and ask for money. They give him wine to drink and roast lamb to eat because he is rich. Before the war what the priest said was thought to be what God said. Now he can't get anybody to go to church and stand for five hours hungry. It's a punishment. During the World War our people went many places—Salonika, Serbia, Bucharest—and saw how people lived; they then agreed that life in the village was too hard and not for the likes of them."

Education, which ordinarily was held in very high esteem, had yielded ground to commercialism. Villagers were beginning to prefer money to education, and said:

"In Sofia there are many unemployed educated people, and so if I have money, I'll be better off than if I had education."

Many of the villagers considered it highly desirable to have a government pension, and so valued jobs with the state railways, state telegraph system, or postal service.

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556 181 An intelligent woman once summed up for me the peasant's attitude toward labor and money in this terse fashion:

"Most people work because they want money. Everyone looks for money."

511 181 434 Although the peasant considered money of greater importance than formerly because he was becoming more and more a part of a money economy, he really handled very little in the course of a year. The annual income for a family of four or five was less than two hundred dollars, an amount that came into the family coffer in driblets and was paid out as slowly as possible. After the autumn market or the sale of a cow, the peasant was flush with money, but when he had bought the necessities which he could not produce for himself (kerosene, shoes and other articles of clothing, rice, salt, and some hardware) he was little better off financially. If a member of the family worked outside the home, his wages were a considerable help, especially when some of the many taxes were due.

465 181 I asked nine young men, picked at random, about the money they earned. Their monthly income varied from the meager equivalent of $6 a month earned by a twenty-five-year-old servant and an eighteen-year-old shepherd to $66 earned by a twenty-year-old milkman. There was only one who kept more than half of his earnings for himself. He explained apologetically that the reason he did not turn these over to his father was that he had to pay board and rent in Sofia, where he worked.

454 181 Very few Dragalevtsy people accumulated savings in the bank. They preferred, like people all over Bulgaria, to invest money in real estate. The city people did it because of the security of investment, whereas the peasants, especially in Dragalevtsy, were more interested in possessing land for its own sake.

426 181 The great majority of the peasants were in debt, though many debtors were also creditors. Those specializing in field crops preferred long-term loans, usually for fifteen or twenty years, with land as security, while sheep owners usually sought short-term loans of three or four months. One village merchant, to whom many peasants came for advice, estimated that 70 per cent of the loans were taken from banks and 30 per cent from individuals. The government had done much in the past through periodic moratoria to reduce the amount of indebtedness.

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One account in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* describes their[1] 181
nomadic existence and the camps they formed out of rings of wagons. 175
"They wore long beards and mustachios, and were dressed in long 144
kaftans. The food of the wealthy was blood and mares' milk; of the poor, millet and mead. They were originally 'magicians', i.e., fire-worshippers; but a form of Islam early became current among them, and the nation was temporarily converted to Christianity in 1007-1008. They were the most dreaded and detested of all the nomads." They were disagreeable in other ways too. But when the writer goes on to describe the *Shopi* of today, the descendants of these Pechenegi, as "despised by the other inhabitants of Bulgaria for their bestiality and stupidity but dreaded for their savagery," I wondered how much he was letting historical antecedents influence his description of the present. He goes on to say: "They are a singularly repellent race, short-legged, yellow-skinned, with slanting eyes and projecting cheekbones. Their villages are generally filthy, but the women's costumes show a barbaric profusion of gold lace." The *Shopi* then have quite a reputation to live up to—bestial, stupid, savage, ugly, filthy, and barbaric in their tastes. Some of these definitely do apply. My version of the *Shopi* necessarily includes some positive as well as negative traits, for I have lived among them and have learned to see their good as well as their bad points.

But I must admit that if one looks to the Bulgarian ancestors of the *Shopi* for the origin of the parricide story, he will also find forebears capable of such a deed. According to Henry N. Brailsford's *Macedonia* the Volga-men, or Bulgarians, "were polygamists, owned slaves, and were accustomed to military discipline. Like the Turks they shaved their heads and wore pigtails. They burned their widows and indulged in human sacrifices." This is not a pretty picture, but one which bears marked resemblances to the accounts of the tribes in western Europe before the spread of civilization to that area.

The killing of feeble parents has been a common practice among 888
nomadic peoples because of the difficulty of caring for the aged and infirm when on the move. The mention of grain in the story quoted above would indicate that the tribe had settled down, and that parri-

[1] [i.e. the Pechenegi, Bulgarian ancestors--ANALYST]

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did the most talking. The women found it difficult to say which one helped the others most, because "this depends so much upon one's special knowledge of cooking, caring for the sick, and sewing." Each woman was expert in a different line, but all were willing to help in any way.

The distinction between age groups broke down when the group was hard at work, as the work was then more important than the flow of gossip. In general, the gossiping groups got together more frequently in the summertime and on Sundays. Women found their chief recreation with women, and men with men, though the men said they needed the stimulation of tavern society.

This willingness of the men to spend money for recreation and to limit their wives to the questionable joys of gossip illustrated the common saying, "Bulgaria is a man's country." A Dragalevtsy peasant saw nothing strange in the sight of a man riding a donkey while his wife trudged along behind carrying their purchases home from market. Or if a man returned alone from market, having ridden all the way in his wagon, his wife, tired from a day in the field, went out to carry in his things, saying, "He's weary and needs my help." She was always careful to make no queries about the day's activities, although she might be bursting with curiosity to know what had happened at market. She went about her work and waited until he was comfortably fed and settled, knowing full well that then she would have a complete report. Usually her husband made himself out to be the hero of each little episode, but "men are like that," she would say.

The well trained wife always deferred to her husband. If ever I asked a question in the presence of both, the woman turned her eyes to see what response her husband made. If he made a gesture as though to say, "You go ahead and answer," then she began to talk, becoming silent whenever her husband wished to interject any comments.

What was even more conclusive proof that Bulgaria was a man's country, and certainly that Dragalevtsy was a man's village, was the obedience of women to their husband's command. I asked thirty wives in the course of my family interviews:

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562 "Suppose you wanted to go to market some Friday and your husband thought you ought not to go, what would you do?"

● 181 Not a single wife would dare go to market under these circumstances. Two or three said, "I wouldn't even start for the door."

593 "But suppose you wanted to make some small purchases in the city and your husband disapproved, what would you do?" Only two daring ones out of the thirty said they would make these purchases if they had money.

It paid the women to "behave," because the husband did have the right to beat a disrespectful wife. I never happened upon a wife-beating, but the fact that a few husbands told me with pride, "I never beat my wife," showed me that they considered themselves exceptional.

[208] A wife who received rough treatment, especially if her husband had been drinking, could go to her father's home. She could not stay 562 there very long after her mate had become sober, because her father 593 and the village in general made her feel that her place was with her husband no matter how disagreeable he might be. Usually she waited until her husband came with a meek promise of good behavior to ask her to come back.

In those formal ways a village wife showed respect to her husband. She did not, most of the time, find them burdensome because she knew nothing else. All of her experiences from childhood to [208] marriage had conditioned her to a subordinate role. Should any woman have tried to rebel against her lot other women would have been her most vigorous critics. They, more than the men, aided in the perpetuation of the existing order.

562 The woman, however, had a far more important place than the social amenities would indicate. Men frankly admitted that they 581 could not make a living without their wives. This feeling of de- 593 pendence overshadowed the traditional masculine superiority to the extent that a partnership resulted. The man, to be sure, was the senior partner, but he knew that he was a member of a team in which co-operation was essential.

This deeper sense of partnership was best shown by the practice husbands had of consulting their wives on every matter of importance as well as on minor matters. Out of twenty-six representative cases,

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intelligentsia, when it came to the point dared not run counter to the old village sanctions against divorce.

More often it was the husband who left the home. When he did and in rare cases interested himself in another woman, the villagers did all in their power to make him return. If he refused at first, they made him feel the indignation of public opinion, treating him as an outcast and sometimes going to the length of beating him. If he remained in the village, he had no choice but to go back to his wife. During the time he was away his wife also was put to shame, getting little sympathy from the general public. She knew, furthermore, that in case of a divorce both parties would be held guilty by the villagers, so she was willing to take her husband back and get along with him as best she could. A divorced man was considered to have loose morals; a divorced woman would have been thought thoroughly bad. There was thus a situation in which everyone was expected to marry, with no sanctioned way out once the marriage contract had been entered upon. Though such an attitude meant that unfortunate marriages had to drag on interminably, it also had the effect of forcing couples to adjust themselves to each other.

Dragalevtsy seemed a curiosity indeed: a village in which marriage was little questioned, where there was practically no marital unfaithfulness, and no divorce. What were the reasons for the family stability? For one thing, life was still lived according to ancient customs. People only recently had begun to wonder about the age-old patterns which they had been following so faithfully. Some writers would call them the "dead hand of the past," others "the cake of custom." Whatever their name, they were conducive to a common understanding of the place of marriage. All the people expected the same things from life and from the home.

Then, too, earning their living by farming was a joint enterprise. People got used to putting their shoulders to the wheel as a family group. In addition to what they all did together, women were supposed to do certain things, men other things, and children still other things. As long as every person did his part there was no friction, but quiet efficiency. Furthermore, the presence of a number of relatives made for greater stability. In the case of apparent misunderstanding

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between a husband and wife, the proper relative intervened to suggest a way out. Most of the husband's relatives were in the same locality with him and could keep an eye on his behavior.

One was not only tied closely to the husband's blood kin *(rodstvo)* but had to enter upon a formal relationship with one's in-laws. Families related by marriage felt close to each other, the intensity of the feeling depending upon the frequency with which the families met and the way the young couples got along. Ordinarily, however, the family of the bride was considered by the husband's parents to be as close, at times even closer, than blood relatives. For instance, if there was any sort of celebration to which guests were invited, the family of the bride was the first to be asked. One reliable informant estimated that ninety out of one hundred people in Dragalevtsy felt the force of *svatovstvo,* or this relationship springing up through intermarriage. The young people, who are usually so prone to make a break with the past, maintained it in all its vigor. Here was the way one young man explained the *svatovstvo:*

"If my sister married some man in Simeonovo, even though I had never seen him before, his brother and sister would be my *svati,* and if I met them we would feel like cousins. I would never curse them or quarrel with them and would call their father *'dedo'* and their mother *'baba,'* the same names I use for my own grandparents. My parents and the parents of my new brother-in-law would likewise be *svati* and would treat one another reverently." Two brothers could not marry two sisters from another family, though there was no blood relationship, because the second couple were *svati* after the first couple married, and *svati* could not marry. Two brothers could marry two first cousins, but not two sisters. This feeling of closeness in families related by marriage did not stop with the husband and the wife, nor with the single in-law gained by each family. It included, as well, the in-law's parents and brothers and sisters with whom just dealings and proper behavior had always to prevail.

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More than anything else, however, the shared activities of husband and wife developed an understanding which lasted through thick and thin. Some of these shared activities were the trip to market, the

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CHAPTER VIII

FAMILISM, A CHANGING WAY OF LIFE

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THE DAY at last arrived when I could anticipate the peasants' answers to most of the questions that I asked them. When I inquired what they would do if they had five hundred dollars to spend, I could list in advance the items they would name. The older people, especially, thought and acted largely in terms of the Dragalevtsy of the "good old days," when life was lived in a *familistic* way because the family played the major role in the community. When I understood the characteristics of familism, as a result of observing and reading about peasant life in other parts of the world, the many interesting but isolated facts I had noticed in Dragalevtsy began to make sense and to form a pattern. In a familistic society, whether it is in the Balkans or China, life is largely customary and traditional. Individualism is discouraged because of the crises that the unusual person creates in the daily routine. People prefer a dead uniformity, or a leveling of the best toward the mediocre. The family plays the leading part in this task of molding an individual into the accepted pattern. From childhood to old age the kinship group brings pressure to bear upon any nonconformist, since the family as a whole loses prestige in the community if a member gets out of hand. The family, too, is the chief training ground for the young, and parents cannot blithely transfer any responsibility of this sort to an outside agency such as the school or the church. Village opinion holds the parents accountable.

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Furthermore, economic life is centered about the family. Since family members grow or make for themselves most of the things they need, they depend only to a minor degree upon stores, factories, and other commercial agencies. The family is the productive, distributive, and consumptive unit. This is one reason why village families can weather so many wars and so many depressions: they can satisfy most of their immediate wants at home.

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Visitors suddenly confronted with the familistic way of life for the first time are often shocked at the low level of living which they observe: animals sharing the same dwelling; monotonous diet and low health standards; waste of time and energy with inefficient tools and methods. Before the peasant is condemned as unambitious, indolent, or stupid, there are a few things the outsider must bear in mind. In agricultural villages throughout the world the land base has been shrinking while the population has been expanding. This has meant decreased economic opportunity. Farms which were once adequate are now divided up strip by strip and handed over to many descendants, with the results that the term "eking out a living" has come to have real meaning for the peasant. The outsider often forgets that the rise in the level of living in the cities through the techniques of mass production and mass distribution has been relatively recent and phenomenally rapid. The villager is not really so far behind the times if one compares his life with that of many cities a few decades ago, or with the blighted areas of these same cities today. But one cannot deny that quite a few peasants seem to take pride in resisting social change; they are slow to experiment with new methods, and they assume that what was good enough for their fathers is good enough for them. This resistance is based, to a great degree, upon the realization that accepting too much from outside will seriously affect the social organization of their community. Urban society is not nearly so close-knit and can allow for contradictions and inconsistencies on a much broader scale than can the village, where life is still intimate and face-to-face. Dragalevtsy people, for example, in 1937 were conscious of the far-reaching changes brought about by the abandonment of sheep raising in favor of dairying. Sometime ago, a number of the peasants actively resisted this economic trend. In the opinion of many, these conservatives were stupid; at the same time they were bright enough to figure out that changes would result in the economy to which they were accustomed. Because they were accustomed to it, they wanted to preserve it.

In a familistic society religion has usually become rigidly institutionalized and is closely allied with the family. All family events call for the blessing of the religious intermediary; there are usually household shrines; there is considerable emphasis upon observing the

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181 829 596 forms of the religion; and usually the prevailing religion has a monopoly in its field. Where there once existed two or three competing religions, the peasants now have a syncretistic set of beliefs that almost all of the people accept.

[168] The population in a familistic society tends to be stable. The folk legends and religious beliefs stress the importance of remaining at home. Permanence becomes a virtue, for travel outside introduces too much novelty. Separation places a strain upon the family relationships, which must be kept at full vigor in the interest of community self-preservation.

[517] Recreation is personalized instead of being commercialized. Peasants, as far as possible, spend their leisure hours in the company of others, to say nothing of the many hours women spend working with each other within a family or neighborhood circle. Just as the villagers have ceremonial ways of doing many things, they also have formal ways, or proverbs, of saying many things. This we saw earlier in the description of the *Šedenki*. Proverbs reinforce those beliefs that help maintain the familistic society, and serve as convenient means of self-expression. At the same time they are standards of behavior.

[212] Because recreation and economic life are personal, the familistic society has little need for much reading and writing. The priest, the middlemen, the taxgatherers, and a few others who early associated themselves with the village economy needed to "figure," but the rest of the people had little concern with that.

In most family-dominated societies, life is man-centered. In some areas this arrangement is related to religious beliefs; in others, it is related to the economic organization of the family in which somebody has to give orders necessary to the carrying out of the daily activities. A recognized head, conscious of his own importance, acts authoritatively in directing his family group.

The local government is traditionally managed by elders, who represent families rather than political parties or individuals. The village elders make their decisions from the standpoint of what is good for the village as a whole in the light of precedents rather than from a narrow legalism. The religious writings or sacred legends are conveniently cited to justify the actions they take. Such govern-

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mental activity exists primarily to meet crisis situations and to keep the established ways of life moving smoothly. The giving of relief, the provision of education, healing of the sick, insurance of cattle and crops are all left to the family rather than to the government.

It is quite possible for several societies to use the familistic approach, in the sense that the family is the dominant institution, and still differ as to the relative importance of many community values. Most of them would probably respect the heritage from the past, but even here there would be variations. As far as Dragalevtsy was concerned, the chief values or virtues were land ownership, hard work, frugality, premarital chastity, observance of some of the more important religious rites, and being a good neighbor. In connection with the last, the villagers said, "God help those with bad neighbors" and "Without good neighbors life couldn't go on."

The Dragalevtsy people, although their underlying organization and philosophy was primarily familistic, had adjusted themselves to a number of modern ways. Some ways persisted because they fitted in with the established customs, and others because they were kept in vogue by force or by the authority of the mayor.

Commerce, as represented by about ten merchant groups, had become established in the village because it was conducted essentially as a family enterprise. From time to time a local man sold some of his land and started in business for himself. He always employed members of his family rather than outsiders, because he trusted his own. If he needed extra help and had an unmarried son, the normal thing was to urge matrimony. He carried over into his business the same idea of division of labor which prevailed at home and in the field. The men ordered the goods, settled the accounts, sold the liquor in the taverns. The women acted as cooks or clerks. Some of the wives who helped keep the store could not read, write, add, or subtract and had to give whole measurements or else depend upon the customer to hand them the right amount for fractions. A husband explained when I discussed the matter with him, "It is better to lose money through error than through dishonesty." Both men and women co-operated in keeping the place clean. Here the man made a concession which he would seldom have made in the home.

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659 794 a year, the priest asked the board members to assemble at the church, minutes were kept, and no outsiders attended. The government's influence was further felt during the period 1934-1937, when all political elections were suspended, and with these all church board elections too. No one was eligible to vote.

659 869 771 As the national school and church authorities had not been satisfied with the type of religious training that the children had been getting in the average peasant home, they had set up in each village an organization called "The Association for the Orthodox Christianization of Bulgarian Youth." In general, the work of the group consisted in teaching the school children the significance of the iconostas, church ceremonies, and other related matters. School hours were used, and attendance was compulsory. The school director, who had been asked by the Archbishop in Sofia to conduct the work of the association in co-operation with the priest, said that they had had about twenty-five meetings during the year. Parents and others who were interested attended these meetings. This was one activity which the peasants had accepted quite willingly because, as one woman said, "the children are kept off the streets when there is a group gathering, and thus do not learn so many bad things." This was the woman's way of berating parents for failing to take better care of their children. But fundamentally the acceptance was based upon the traditional recognition of the church's importance. In the past, whatever had bolstered up the established church had bolstered up the familistic system.

178 ● 181 596 Such a barrage from the batteries of commerce, government, and education[1] had left the familistic way of life in Dragalevtsy battered but not crumbling. The peasants were still amused at the intense activity of the intelligentsia; the few who were asked to confer with the authorities enjoyed reporting back to their families and friends just what they said and did. The people co-operated in the campaigns for this-and-that only when they knew that the mayor would send the policeman along if they did not co-operate. They attended lectures when ordered to do so, but they joined few of the organizations planned outside. Perhaps the best indication that this beehive of governmental activity was still on the surface was the failure of the peasants to seek advice from the intelligentsia who were supposedly there to help

[1] [For a detailed account, see category 114, pp. 161-176.--Analyst]

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them. An exceptional peasant did; but the vast majority kept an eye upon what was going on without becoming involved in any newly initiated affairs.

Just the same, changes were in the making. Year after year, within given limits, people would be content to do what the authorities told them to do. This was because their family life, with its emphasis upon obedience and respect, had made them docile. If the commands proved too disruptive, however, or took away the things they counted most dear, their family and their land, they resisted.

But the peasants were little interested in fighting for political rights; these were individualistic and not in keeping with familism, which emphasized the welfare of the group rather than the rights of the individual. They did not yet want to have a hand in what went on in Sofia, in Berlin, or Washington. They still were village oriented. To be sure, war affected them, as did the price of grain, but in much the same fatalistic way that a heat wave or a cold snap would. They did not yet feel that they, and millions like them throughout Bulgaria, had the power to control many things affecting their daily life. Some of their fellow villagers in other parts of Bulgaria were alive to this fact, but Dragalevtsy was still politically illiterate.

The leaders in the village were aware of their lack of success. Some of them were disappointed in the peasants for not accepting at face value the words of wisdom they proffered so freely; others cautioned patience. They said, "We can't change things overnight. We will work with the children in the school. Our future lies with them." And they were right. But it was clear that the future they anticipated would be much more distant if the leaders continued to force upon the peasants a way of life imported from "the people of the outside world." Their quickest success lay in evaluating the familistic society that existed, in deciding what should be retained, and what changes should be made. The next step would be to discover by what means, already in use in the village, these changes could be effected. Then, above all, the leaders should have sought to persuade the peasants to help themselves. The governmental paternalism at work in Dragalevtsy created as many local problems as it solved.

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The conflict was on, then, between the old and the new, between familism and the forces from the "people of the outside world." It was a stirring struggle when viewed in terms of people I had come to know and respect. It became a significant struggle when I remembered that Dragalevtsy was only one village out of hundreds of thousands where the conflict was even then being dramatically staged.

The new way of life that emerges may be more democratic or it may be the basis for additional authoritarian states. Democracy can be assured only if its representatives, who introduce the new, have an insight into the peasants' way of life, a sympathy that is so genuine that it can be quickly sensed by untutored folk, and a skill that can weave into the fabric of the past the strands of the present, in keeping with a sensible pattern for the future.

DEPARTURE—AUGUST, 1937

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THE VILLAGE seemed unusually peaceful on that August day in 1937 when I made the rounds to tell my friends in Dragalevtsy goodbye. Many wanted to know how long the trip to America would take, others asked about my future plans. The majority said, *"do vizhdane"* ("till we meet again"), but several of the older people, who had patiently endured many hours of interviews in the previous months, sensed that their "time" would come before I set foot in Dragalevtsy again. They used the other form of leave-taking—*"sbogom"* ("God be with you"), and also asked God's blessing upon my trip. The mayor told me how much he had enjoyed having me study his village, the priest asked me not to forget my many friends, and Bai Penko took great delight in showing off his new grandson whom I had never seen.

The weather was hot. Few people moved through the Square and only occasionally did a wagon creak down the streets to the fields below the village. Even the flies, usually so troublesome, seemed languid. The dogs slept. Vitosha had lost its cap of snow. Storks

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APPENDIX V

THE SOCIAL CONTACTS OF A BULGARIAN VILLAGE*

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It seems an anomaly that the peasants who live in the Sofia region are among the most conservative in Bulgaria. One often hears the statement from Bulgarian and foreigner alike: "Surely the fact that a peasant lives near Sofia, a city of almost 300,000 inhabitants, should have some pronounced effect upon his attitudes and lower his resistance to social change." But there is universal agreement that these peasants are backward, though there is divergence of opinion as to the reason why. An early writer[1] advanced the theory that the *Shopi*[2] stock had been weakened because of the frequent "calls to arms" answered by the peasants. Living as they do on the edge of the important Sofia plain these peasants have been drafted for military service much more frequently than their fellows in the distant mountain recesses. In the little village of Dragalevtsy, four and a half miles from the outskirts of Sofia, more than forty fruit trees grow near the War Memorial, a tree for each son fallen on the field of battle since 1885, the date of the Bulgarian-Serbian War.

Another explanation for the *Shopi* conservatism is the fact that close proximity to the city makes it easy for the most intelligent and the most ambitious villagers to break with the village and establish themselves in Sofia. One of Dragalevtsy's most brilliant young men now resides in Sofia and visits the village only occasionally. But during his early days in the village he was a dynamic spirit: serving as president of the School Board at the time of negotiations for and erection of the handsome new school building; as chairman of the Committee on the Erection of a War Memorial, carrying the project through to successful conclusion where four previous committees had failed and the funds collected mysteriously disappeared; as president of the Reading Room Association, a "cultural" organization which has become an uplifting force in villages throughout the land. But now that he is gone, no native has arisen to lead as he led.

The *Agronom* for that district explains the conservatism in part by the poverty of the soil. Unproductive soil forms a poor basis for an enlightened,

* This article appeared in *Rural Sociology*, IV, No. 3, September, 1939. Reprinted by permission.

[1] Irechek, Konstantin, who traveled extensively in Bulgaria in the latter part of last century.

[2] *Shopi*—the term used of the peasants in the Sofia region. Formerly it was derogatory in content.

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up-to-date type of farmer. Coupled with poor soil is the dividing up of the farm among all the children upon the death of the family head, with the result that farms become smaller, strips of land more numerous and scattered, and the occupation of farming a less remunerative enterprise.

Other theories take into account the descent of the *Shopi* from stock differing from that of Bulgarians in other parts of the country and their lack of educational facilities under Turkish rule (14th to 19th centuries). Then, too, we should remember that Sofia was nothing but a small provincial town—not much more than an overgrown village at the time of Bulgaria's liberation in 1878.

Part of my purpose in selecting one village for investigation was to determine as far as I could what contacts these villagers had with the outside world. I knew that I would probably arrive at no single all-embracing explanation of *Shopi* conservatism, but I did feel that I could suggest to those interested in overcoming this conservatism the proper modes of attack.

The analysis of Dragalevtsy's[3] social contacts falls naturally into two divisions: (A) the peasants' contacts outside the village, and (B) the peasants' contacts with the "outside world"[4] within the village.

THE PEASANT VISITS THE "OUTSIDE WORLD"

1. To Sell and Buy; to Work. Thirty-eight milkmen go from Dragalevtsy to Sofia every morning. Eight walk beside a donkey; thirty ride in the high two-wheeled horse-drawn carts. The majority of milkmen cover a milk route, knocking at the doors of the regular customers and waiting patiently for the maid to bring a container into which to pour a quart or so of milk from the large cans they carry. The rest, perhaps less energetic and content with a lower price, leave their milk at a milk-station just inside the city limits. They are paid weekly and do not have the bother of making collections from housewives; furthermore, they do not have to rustle out of bed so early in the morning. Some of the milkmen buy newspapers to read on the return trip, some like to go farther into the city for a glass of wine or brandy, but most hurry back home to aid in the work on the farm, especially if a busy season is on.

Besides the milkmen there are sixteen workmen and ten students who make the daily trip and serve as a bond between the village and the outside world. These two groups are usually less opinionated and better trained than the other villagers to whom they attempt to interpret the puzzling aspects of western culture manifested in Sofia.

[3] Population, December 31, 1934: 1,669 inhabitants.

[4] The peasants often speak of Sofia as "the outside world" and people from Sofia as "the people from the outside world," thus showing that a pronounced psychological barrier exists.

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APPENDIX VII

THE FOLK APPROACH IN EXTENSION WORK

A BULGARIAN EXPERIENCE*

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THE INCIDENT. One day in Dragalevtsy, a Bulgarian village of 1,600 people, the mayor's courier went from house to house to inform all expectant mothers of a meeting to be held in the schoolhouse the next afternoon. The public health nurse from Sofia wanted to tell them about prenatal and postnatal care. Attendance, according to the courier, was compulsory. As he made his rounds, comments such as these flowed in his wake: "What does that mayor think he's doing? Making a public spectacle of pregnant women!" "I've already had more babies than that nurse will ever have. She can't tell me anything I don't know." By nightfall the women of the village, after discussing it over the stone fences between the yards, had decided that the expectant mothers should not attend the meeting.

The next afternoon two or three women did appear, women whose families felt under obligation to the mayor and consequently supported all of his programs. The mayor and the nurse were much disappointed, but dared not invoke the compulsory part of the courier's invitation. The nurse went ahead with her demonstration for the faithful few, but even these left the meeting much bewildered and quite disappointed. They told their friends, "We couldn't buy all the stuff she told us to buy, even if we should want to do everything she suggested."

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THE PROBLEM. Incidents similar to this occurred so frequently during my three-year study of that village that I tried to discover what more effective approach could be used to bridge the gap between the scientific and the folk knowledge. The mayor and those assisting him were well-intentioned, but the people never seemed to apply the suggestions that the outside lecturers made. Accordingly, the lecturers became more convinced that the peasants were stupid, and the peasants became more self-satisfied with the ways that they already had. What was supposed to be *extension of the new* really became *extinction of the new* before it had time to take root.

The "uplifters," who frequently used the phrase *izdigane na seloto* or "the raising up of the village," were unnecessarily complicating their task.

* This article appeared in *Journal of Applied Anthropology*, II, No. 4, September, 1943. Used by permission. This also appeared later in *Autonomous Groups Bulletin* as Vol. I, No. 3.

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178 Instead of concentrating on the improvement of home-making and the en-
181 couragement of hygienic practices, which were their primary aims, they were also trying to change the women's meeting habits, or their ways of getting together. They insisted that the women leave their homes and come to the school for an artificially assembled meeting of a stiff, formal sort where they would be on the "receiving end," without the give-and-take of informal conversation to which they were accustomed.

As I sensed this difficulty I became convinced that the folkways already provided an avenue to the village women: namely, the *sedenka,* or "sitting," which is the name the villagers have given to the women's working groups.

574 THE SEDENKA.[1] Allegedly, the main purpose of the *sedenka* is to help some
476 woman card her fluffy, newly-washed wool or to help her spin some of the wool into thread. Actually, it is recreational as well, for the women thoroughly enjoy sharing the gossip, the songs, and the food which accompany such get-togethers. Although these *sedenki* (pl.) seem at times to be hit-or-miss affairs, certain unwritten rules govern their activity. If a woman, for example, wants to have the help of her neighbors in carding her wool there are procedures she must follow.

1. She will select the guests quite carefully, inviting those who owe her work in kind or those to whose houses she wants to be invited when they card their wool. She rejects from the number those who cause ill-feeling, who stir up trouble, or who are at odds with each other. Similarly she rejects those whose houses she does not want to visit in a "return engagement" either because their food is poorly prepared or because they are dirty and slovenly in their housekeeping. At times she is prevailed upon by a close friend or a relative to invite some individual who is not popular enough to receive many invitations but who is anxious for the social intercourse that these occasions provide.

2. She will issue the invitations in the time-honored way. Although she may have seen two friends the evening before at the fountain and learned from them that they definitely plan to attend, she nevertheless goes to their homes before daybreak to call out in the crisp autumn air, "Anka, Anka." The dogs set up a terrific roar, and Anka finally appears at the door. "I'm having a *sedenka* today and I hope you can come." Anka accepts most graciously, while the walking alarm clock moves on to issue the next invitation.

3. She will prepare quantities of special food. There are certain dishes that are *sedenka* favorites. In the fall, one of these is *banitsa,* a soggy pumpkin pie two feet in diameter. A stew of beans or one of meat and vegetables is often popular.

4. She will see that the activities at the *sedenka* flow along normally. There must be enough of the comb-like affairs, long spikes set in a small

[1] [For additional material, see pp. 74-77, category 116--Analyst]

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The mayor has some influence with the Debt Commissions coming from government banks to relieve the debt burdens of the farmers, he distributes whatever relief is available for needy families, and he has a prominent part in the administration of the school, public health, and village improvements. Because of this he is gradually displacing the priest as the most important personality in the village. In other words, the paternalism of the church is now being supplanted by that of the state.

We find a similar situation in the South where white farmers are beginning to depend less upon landlords, banks, and advancing merchants, and more upon the grants from governmental units, whether in the form of relief or credit facilities. Plantation or small-town paternalism is yielding to governmental paternalism.

The Bulgarian peasant is not a joiner. He does not use the organizational approach in attacking a problem but prefers to work through informal groups. There are two chief reasons why he avoids membership in the numerous formal groups seeking the villagers' support: first, he is penurious and will pay no membership fee unless he sees some prospect of personal advantage; secondly, he does not understand the purpose or program of the organizations, since most of them originate in the cities and are promoted by the *intelligentsia*. There are no church organizations claiming his support as in the case in most Southern neighborhoods. Living in a village as he does the peasant can visit with friends and neighbors without the necessity of having an organization to provide a rallying place.

The Southern white thinks vertically; the Bulgarian peasant horizontally —a difference in mental pattern which accounts for the difference in social process.

By "thinking vertically" I mean that traditionally the Southern white is dominated by the attraction of the American ladder of opportunity, although for him it has often proved mythical.[20] That is, success in life is determined by the extent to which one approximates the plane of living enjoyed by those of a higher economic level. Climbing means competition rather than co-operation.[20] Frustration seems to be displacing the traditional, optimistic view among many of the Southern whites. They look up the ladder, but say, "What's the use of starting the climb!" As individuals they are pitted against forces over which they have no control.[21]

[20] H. C. Nixon, *op. cit.*, p. 9. Shows the traditional nature of this mind-set in speaking of the Old South: "Nonslaveowners expected to become small slaveowners, and small slaveowners expected to become large ones." The mythical aspect is shown nowadays by the phrase "once a sharecropper, always a sharecropper."

[20] Odum, *op. cit.*, pp. 585-586, emphasizes the need for county and/or community co-operation.

[21] Perhaps Populism in the late 19th century came as near creating a consciousness of kind among the rural whites as anything else has ever done.

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The Bulgarian peasant in thinking horizontally identifies himself with other agriculturalists and accepts their culture as a heritage of which he is proud. He derives strength as an individual from his consciousness of kind. His attitude was forcibly demonstrated when I tried to get answers to a questionnaire on occupational attitudes. I could not get a single peasant to answer one simple question: If you were not a farmer, what would you most prefer to be? It was inconceivable to them that they should be anything other than farmers. Although the Bulgarian peasant rides frequently in a bus or automobile it never occurs to him to want one of his own. If given an additional sum of money to spend he would buy more of what he already has—land, a new house, or animals. Because he thinks horizontally he co-operates with his fellows. As a matter of course he submits to stern social control for the common good.

I would like to say in conclusion that the lot of the Bulgarian peasant is not an enviable one; his plane of living is low, but the improvement that will take place can occur in the social organization already in existence. The Bulgarian does have security for which he has had to pay the price of class distinction, at least as it exists in the minds of others; whether the disadvantaged groups of the South are becoming typed as a class without gaining security in exchange is a matter for serious consideration. In the South we are faced with the fact of disorganization among our rural population and a consequent reorganization. It has not been my purpose to map the plan this reorganization should follow, but to present a comparison which may help to clarify and stimulate our thinking as we search realistically for a solution.

000 panied by a representative of the American-Turkish Aid Society, undertook a trip during 1857 in South Bulgaria or, as it was called at that time, Roumelia. They passed through Rodosto and then through Andrinople on their way to Plovdiv (Philippople). Hamlin thought than the Bulgarians were found mostly north of the Balkan mountains. He was greatly surprised to discover that half of the inhabitants of Adrianople were Bulgarians. He[1] said about them: „The spontaneous, modest, kind and respectful behavior of the population can not but attract the attention even of the most casual observer. We were not the object of any ridicule, base curiosity or rough language on the part of either young or old people. We can not say, however, the same about the Greek and Turkish villages". The Bulgarians said to Hamlin: „We have no literature, no schools and, we might even say, we have no language".

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Human culture is founded always on the labour spent for the cultivation of land. During the Hellenic civilization, those who worked the land were called barbarians and, instead of benefiting by it, they were robbed by this civilization. Present Balkan culture, however, suffers from the manifestation of actual barbarism, by blocking the outlets to friendly seas for those who work and labour on the land.

162 **33. The Population of Thrace.** The bigger part of the population of Thrace is Bulgarian. Let us use a few important data:

1. The Bulgarian census of 1919 was carried under very unfavourable conditions. Many Bulgarian Moslems were shown under the clasification of Turks and the Bulgarian population had been reduced, after the Turks had exterminated it, during the so called famous „republic of Giumurdjina".

Bulgarian Christians	87.941	
Bulgarian Moslems	17.369	
Bulgarians total	105,310	47.0 %
Turks	79.539	35.4 %
Greeks	28.647	12.75%
ers	10.922	4.85%
Total	224.418	

1 [Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, American missionary in Constantinople, who visited South Bulgaria in 1857--Analyst]

000 the desire to appreciate this small and suffering country and to develop a respect for her, which she certainly deserves.

39. Bulgaria is the Land of Peace and Labour. The present state of Bulgaria's development is not due to the wealth of any natural resources, as this is the case with other countries more fortunate than she in that respect. She owes her advancement to the hard labour of her population. Hardly any traveller has crossed over her territory and failed to observe sympathetically the distinguishing traits 181 of Bulgaria. Here is how Cyprien Robert, describes the Bulgarians:[1])

„The martial abilities, their wealth and commercial experience made the Bulgarian people so dreadful in the beginning of the Middle Ages; to-day, however, the Bulgarian nation is the least prone and given to luxury as well as the most peace loving among European nations. All who know the present day Bulgarian praise him for his peace virtues. The Bulgarian is ready to render you a favor, he is industrious and has the peculiar ability to act with caution. But once, having made up his mind he goes on to do things with an amazing perseverence supported by an athletic force, which enables him to resist the greatest danger without boasting and with composure. Though the most oppressed of all the other people on the peninsula, the Bulgarians have not succumbed to humiliation and distress. As in all times, the look of the Bulgarian to-day is proud, his robust stature is high and handsome. His honesty is above and beyond reproach. You could safely entrust him with any amount of money and you may be sure that it would be delivered to its destination. People blame him that he trembles at the sight of the Turks. The Bulgarian does not tremble, but when he realizes that all resistance is futile, as a reasonable person, he knows how to submit".

186 Another traveller at the time of the Bulgarian insurrection of 1877, James Baker,[2]) writes the following: „... A peculiar trait of the history of Bulgaria was the great current of national feeling, which obsessed and continues to dominate

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[1]) Cyprien Robert, op. cit. p. 240, a. al.

[2]) J. Baker, Die Türken in Europa; autoris. deutsche Ausgabe. 2-e Auflage. Stuttgart. 1879. p. 24.

8: Bojkoff K-4, 5 (no date) 1946 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

the consciousness of this people. We do not hear of Bulgarian uprisals against their sovereigns, on the contrary, they always appear as a united nation fighting for its independence. This force of united behavior and of national consciousness makes a remarkable impression on any traveller, who visits the Bulgarians to-day. Each of them would come forward, willingly and in earnest, to offer himself as a sacrifice to the welfare of the nation. This is an attitude fraught with great potentialities and possibilities, provided it is guided properly".

Henry C. Barkley,[1]) a British civil engineer, was in Turkish time in charge of the construction of the railroad Tcherna Voda—Constanza (ca 1860) and had an ample opportunity to observe Bulgarians, Turks, Greeks and others at work. He writes: „Amongst the natives proper, far the best and most intelligent workmen were the Bulgars, and with proper education and good example they were capable of doing anything. Unfortunately, at present the only education for the Bulgar is found in the offices and shops of the Levantine merchants in Constantinople and other large towns, where commercial morality is so corrupt that they have no option but to turn out rogues... There are no schools, except those attached to the Greek church, where, I believe, such folly as teaching honesty is unthought of. For this reason the better people are to be avoided as much as possible, but there will be found a great deal of sterling good among the village peasants that only require development. They are steady, quiet, hardworking set of people, patient and unresisting under the Turkish yoke, but at the same time not cringling or servile like their brother-Christians, the Greeks and Armenians. And I have no doubt that were the Turks banished out of Bulgaria, the Bulgars would soon convert into one of the finest and most prosperous countries in Eastern Europe. As much as possible we employed these men on the line, and after years some of them became fitters, cleaners, locomotive drivers, and in fact filled all the places of skilled workmen and it is wonderful to think how they excelled, when one bears in mind how few had been their advantages.

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[1]) Henry C. Barkley, civil engineer, Between the Danube and the Black Sea or five years in Bulgaria, London, 1876, pp. 174—176.

661 641 the hard-earned property of their political opponents, thereby driving the more stable elements to aggressive reaction. The problem of renovation is all the more difficult owing to the national psyche having been perverted by centuries of slavery. It turned the Bulgarian peasant into an extreme egotist, into a man who had no notion of what social solidarity connoted. Excluded for so long from participation in public affairs, he came to view them with extreme suspicion as something separate from his existence and antagonistic to his private interests. Being treated by the Turk as he was previously by his own nobles, and actually by the inteligentsia as an inferior, he came to consider himself as a being apart, in opposition to all the world.

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Experience taugh him that wealth was the only means by which he could improve his position, and ensure for himself a measure of respect. Hence his grasping and individualistic propensities. His extreme individualism makes him refractory even to Socialism, for he feels that his instincts are in harmony with anarchism, rather than with the methodical theories of Karl Marx.

641 181 The Bulgarian has further developed another lamentable characteristic: that of a boundless disrespect for the law. The law was looked upon as an instrument of extortion, to be used by those in power for their own ends and to be modified or broken by them at their own pleasure. The law has never been for the Bulgarian a system under which the rights of the individual were safeguarded. The widely-diffused notion among members of advanced communities that the law embodies the common conscience and the common interest, not only has not percolated into the depths of the nation, but has not even penetrated the superficial strata of its leading circles, and until recently one witnessed the most iniquitous illegalities being committed by the party in power, which abuses, though they

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rouse to fever-heat the indignation of the foreigner, leave the Bulgarian indifferent. It is this lack of public spirit and an extreme self-centredness which renders him apathetic to the wrongs inflicted on others, and which prevent the creation of an alert public opinion capable of checking such misdeeds as the country has been suffering from.

Such is the social inheritance of the Bulgarian. It is with such a mentality that he has emerged to free life. It would be erroneous however, to assume that psychically the Bulgarians stand at a lower level than their neighbours, or that being a backward people they deserved the dismemberment they sustained by the Treaties of Berlin and Neuilly, to the profit of the other Balkan peoples who are more or less of the same mentality, and what is worse, do not excel by those stirling household virtues of the Bulgarians, that go some way to counterbalance their shortcomings, which could be eradicated by a proper system of education.

The high level of the spate of demagogy which submerged Bulgaria was attained soon after the termination of the world war, when her enemies had disarmed her and when, through the weakening of the military factor, the peasant politician Stambuliiski, secured complete control of the state machine. The country then experienced all the horrors of a jacquerie. The evils engendered by the Agrarian regime are tersely set forth by Kosturkov, the capable and outspoken leader of the former Radical party, in a speech delivered in the Sobranye on Sept. 4, 1925: „With few exceptions every Bulgarian government had sown the seeds of corruption and demoralisation, they also however left some positive creative work to their credit. Stambuliiski's regime, however, has left behind an indelible furrow of corruption which it will take scores of years to remove; it is a moral scar that will be most difficult to cure. Moral perversion has been disseminated by the authorities along

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Owing to the lack of funds, the activities of these reading rooms, of which 1,208 are in rural districts, were rather circumscribed, their stock of books was reported to be 847,426, and the books purchased during the year numbered only 127,757.

The new educational reforms comtemplate the suppression of about two thirds of the existing colleges so as to impede access to the higher training establishments and the University. The colleges will be replaced by practical schools, after the German „real schule", a system which according to Prof. Yorga has concurred in dehumanising the youth of Germany. Only those students who posses exceptional endowments will be allowed to complete their college training and qualify for a University education.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL ESSAY

All who have come in close touch with the Bulgarian people have been impressed by such characteristic traits as their diligence, assiduousness, their fondness of labour and their persevering and indefatigable devotion to the land which they till. Frugal and abstemious in the extreme, the Bulgarian peasant provides for his modest needs from the produce of his farm. This form of life which tends to make him self-sufficing and independent of his neighhours has rendered him self-reliant and self-centred to an extreme degree and has militated strongly against the development of social virtues in him. He is capable of submitting to extreme privations, he scoffs at physical suffering, and is almost insensible to pain. He detests affectation and bragging, and takes pride only in collective achievements, national or military. In this he displays a striking similarity to the Japanese whom he

•181 rivals in thriftiness and economical living. Such qualities render him a formidable competitor for his neighbours, all of whom he surpasses in these virtues, and who knowing that separately they can not hold the field against him, have leagued themselves together, to hold down this over-energetic and tenacious rival. Such qualities as the Bulgarian possesses do not win or attract, and consequently he has failed to inspire affection; he has only succeeded in securing the respect and esteem of the positively minded American and British, who refuse to be beguiled by superficial appearances and who by temperament are better able to appreciate such positive attributes as the Bulgarian has been endowed with.

This hard-toiling mode of life led for centuries by the Bulgarian peasantry has habituated them to live solely for themselves, to depend only on their own efforts, to be suspicious of those about them. They are stoics, without pity for themselves, whose sealed springs of sensibility cannot be set flowing for others. Their sense of sympathy seems blunted and the apathy they display for the wrongs suffered by others explains their inability to feel indignation at the committal of injustices when they are not personally affected. Such lack of sympathy and tenderness for others, is incompatible with the formation of an alert public opinion and the exercise of collective volition, which characterises nations endowed with better developed social instincts. The harshness and dourness which characterises the Bulgarian, implies an inherent weakness of what psychologists designate as the Tender emotion.

000 Tender emotion, which is closely related to the parental instinct, must be considered as one of the primary factors in our evolution. As we pass from the lower to the higher types of animals, we indiscriminately find that this instinct becomes more and more powerfully deve-

11: Logio S-4 (no date) 1936 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

wealth that has corrupted a large number of the „intelligentsia". In their efforts to satisfy this insensate craving of altering their style of living and adopting luxurious manners, they have not hesitated to make a litter of all principles. Bulgaria being a poor country, there is no room within her precincts for Sybarites. In Spartan austerity and simplicity will she alone find salvation, for it is such qualities that breed the social virtues and devotion necessary for her renovation.

Of course there are other ways of attacking the evil spirit of acquisitiveness, namely by changing those parts of the social fabric which promote its growth, which is the socialist or communist way, or by setting an example of complete disinterestedness and the military who have been brought up in the stern school of austerity, living ascetic lives of service to the community, and who are in charge of the Government are just the most suitable men for this purpose. There is some chance therefore for them to succeed seeing that both Hitler, and Mussolini, owe mainly their success to their disinterestedness and not only to their effective leadership. It is the combination of both these qualities that have raised them in popular estimation in their respective countries, and it is to be hoped that Bulgaria's leaders will not fail altogether where others have triumphed.

Much has been said of the dourness, and suspicion of the average Bulgarian, but these traits are also due to the social environment in which he has hitherto grown. He necessarily had to hide his thoughts, and desires from his Turkish overlord, and keep these to himself. He thus became unsociable and uncommunicative, a world to himself, and even to-day his social self-consciousness does not extend beyond the narrow limits of his family. What is indispensable is the gradual extension of this sentiment of devotion beyond the family, in order that it might emb-

race a larger group, such as the nation. For much of the corruption, and avarice arise from a genuine conviction that one's first duty is to one's own family, a trait which the Bulgarians share with the Chinese, among whom owing to the Confucian philosophy, the same view prevails, and has done much to stunt the growth of public spirit. (see Bertrand Russell's. „The Problem of China").

As the Bulgarian is certainly not defective in his attachment to his near kin, and this is patent by the extreme sacrifices which he readily makes in order to provide for the education of his children, the expansion of this existing sentiment so as to comprise the nation as a group would be possible, and the value of such an expanded sentiment can be easily grasped. Group self-consciousness and a sentiment developed about the idea of the group becomes a power capable of holding the group together in spite of all physical, and moral difficulties. It is indispensable therefore that such a socially valuable sentiment should be cultivated to the utmost, all the more so since even such an eminent psychologist as Wm. Mc Dougall („The Group Mind" p. 79) does not hesitate to declare:

„The group spirit destroys the opposition and the conflict between the crudely individualistic end the primitive altruistic tendencies of our nature. — This is the peculiar merit and efficiency of the complex motives that arise from the group spirit; they bring the egoistic self-seeking impulses into the service of society and harmonise them with the altruistic tendencies. The group spirit secures that the egoistic and the altruistic tendencies of each man's nature instead of being in perpetual conflict, as they must be in its absence, shall harmoniously co-operate and re-enforce one another throughout a large part of the total field of human activity.

For it is of the essence of the group spirit that the individual identifies himself with the group more or less; that is to say, in technical language, his self-regarding sentiment becomes extended to the group more or less completely, so that he is moved to desire

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village and start inundating them in a spate of demagogic rhetoric. The orators of each political group would start vituperating and abusing their rivals, thus undermining completely the prestige of the intellectuals until the peasantry came to look on all with undisguised hatred and contempt. There has not been an example of such a deep cleavage within a people in recent times except in Tsarist Russia, with the well-known consequences, and if something is not done to assure the peasantry that the State will henceforth uphold and protect their interests, and instil in them the conviction that the abuses of the past are definitely over, we may well be anxious as to the future, for however self-sacrificing and patriotic the rulers of Bulgaria may be, the task they have shouldered is a stupendous one and the organs they must depend on for carrying it out are not as reliable as could be wished. And yet it is through the efforts of this „intelligentsia" that the country will have to work its way upwards, for the salvation of countries, the evolution of which has been retarded, depends on the predominance of urban civilisation over rural backwardness.

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It is of undoubted interest to record the views of one of the leaders of the sole political party which was actuated by a true conception of democratic principles and which persistently upheld them, but which failed to rally round it sufficient supporters to impose them because the Bulgarian elector expected to get some direct advantages in exchange for his vote, a practice the Bulgarian Radicals always denounced and fought against.

Thus M. Kosturkov speaking in the Sobranye on December 21, 1926 said among other things:

„We are with servile souls. A nation impregnated with a sense of freedom and having a sense of self-respect does not allow the authorities to usurp its liberty and its rights. It is always ready to place its rulers in their due place. I am not indignant at the servi-

lity of the masses but at that of the greater part of the intelligentsia, and it is in disgust that I hear their servile speeches when in presence of influential men. According to me none can equal our average man for his envy and our demagogues exploit to the utmost this sentiment. Instead of combatting this inherent defect we make capital out of it in our political struggles. Another national defect is our greed which we exploit and excite. We lack all sense of measure, we are extremists with an anarchic individualism that has no equal. All these defects are being fostered by our politicians and the Bulgarian who is by nature most peaceful is being made pugnacious by our dremagogues who rouse his low instincts and incite him against his brethren. Bulgarians love science and knowledge and they should be guided towards this goal, for while absorbed in creative work their bad instincts will slumber. Although very suspicious, if once confidence is instilled they become extremely credulous. So long as a government uses force there will be no pacification in Bulgaria. Only democracy will give a government of order. Violence and hatred does not create anything lasting but on the contrary will further deepen the existing chasm between rulers and ruled".

Unfortunately M. Kosturkov's prognostication as to the efficacy of democracy was wrong. Bulgaria secured in 1931 a really democratically elected government which to all appearance was perfectly democratic in its composition yet it brought and engendered disorder, and what was most surprising, it encompassed the overthrov of M. Kosturkov himself, who as all will admit, was the only true representative of democracy in the Cabinet. M. Sakuzov, the veteran leader of the Social-democrats was apparently better inspired when he admitted in the Sobranye on December 24, 1926: „Such popular forces as come to the surface are incapable of coordination and harmonious co-operation. The Agrarian regime dealt a stuning blow to the conception of a government by the popular masses".

The Bulgarian is characterised by a sense of fairness and honesty in his dealings with his fellow-men, this is in striking contrast with his attitude towards the State which he does not scruple to cheat or despoil because he believes

181 641 that he need not stand on ceremony with it since it has mercilessly exploited him. He is generally a man who will abide by his promise but he expects that others will likewise do so, and it is very often disregard for assumed obligations that leads the Bulgarian to wreak savage vengeance on the person who breaks a compact.

181 157 In spite of the fact that the Bulgarian people have been subjected for centuries to a rigorous negative selection, for all outstanding personalities were either exterminated by the Turks with whom they necessarily entered in conflict, or became denationalised by offering their services to more advanced nations, in the midst of which they alone could exert their talents, they, nevertheless may be considered as intellectually one of the most gifted of the Balkan peoples.

The value of a people is not gauged by the level of the average individual, but by that of the exceptional men belonging to it; such at least is the opinion of leading sociologists such as Dr. G. le Bon, and Wm. Mc. Dougall so that in this respect Bulgarians have little cause to envy their neighbours. The appearance of exceptional individuals amongst the Bulgarian people has been noted even by Prof. Jovan Cvijić, who writes in his „La Peninsule Balkanique", p. 479:

„De cette très ancienne histoire il y a un fait à retenir, c'est l'apparition d'individus doués d'une volonté extraordinairement puissante. . . La prépondérance de ces fortes individualités nous frappe encore dans les époques plus récentes de l'histoire bulgare. même après la liberation. Le personnage le plus representatif à cet égard fut Stefan Stambulov. Les politiciens bulgares paraissent doués d'une force de volonté plus agissante que ceux des autres types yougoslaves etc"

If in one generation from amongst five million Bulgarians, arose at least three men of genius such as Slaveikoff, Vazoff and Mihailovski this proves that the Bulgarians are a stock worth conserving, not only for

itself, but also on account of the good that humanity might ultimately derive from the flowering of such genius as may arise from its midst. Many will retort that the above mentioned men though talented can in no way be considered as geniuses, but this assertion is obviously refutable, for one in forming a true appreciation of their value should first of all take into consideration the environment in which these men were nurtured. If in spite of the stunting influences which they encountered in the midst of which they have developed, they nevertheless attained such an indisputable preeminence, it cannot be denied that these men must have possessed exceptional mental attainments.

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LITERATURE AND ART

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There are few peoples who in such a brief space of time have equalled the achievements of the Bulgarians in the domain of literature. Without any literary or artistic traditions, except perhaps for the writings of the poet-revolutionary, Christo Botev, without even a literary language, the Bulgarians within the half century of their independent existence as a State, have attained to a level of development in the realm of letters of which many older nations would have justly been proud, and which more than the remarkable material progress accomplished by them, marks them out as a higly endowed people worthy of our admiration and esteem.

Several decades ago, the translation into English of Ivan Vazov's novel "Under the Yoke", proved a revelation and evoked the unstinted applause of all critics. No less a person that Edmund Gosse wrote a most eulogious preface to the book. Yet this was one of Vazov's early works, written at a time he had not yet attained maturity,

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The Bulgarians

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1. Hair dress of young women, with tresses decorated with silver. 2. and 3. Decorative pendants. 4. Head ornament of the brides, made of flowers and silver coins. 5. Woman wearing an embroidered blouse and a woven carpet apron. 6. Drawing well. 7. Neck ornament. 8. Hand mill for salt. 9. Threshing sled. 10. Cave dwelling on the Lon. 11. Fire saw. 12. Village street. 13. Shelter of the field herders. 14. Household altar. 15. Rattle board of wood, from a monastery. 16. Signalling horn of a country mailman. 17. Sawing frame.[1]

175 101 144 At the time of the Romans present-day Bulgaria was called Moesia in its northern (Danube) region, Thracia in its southern section, and it was inhabited by an Indo-European people of North European extraction, at the time when old Greek, and later Roman and Byzantine, immigrants moved there and intermingled with it. From the sixth century on, the Slavic wave moved closer, and from the seventh century onwards Finnish Turko-Tataric migrant herders and horse breeders repeatedly found their way into this country from the middle Volga. 463 From these the Bulgarians adopted and kept the herding system, by the side of which the Thracian and Slavic agriculture was maintained. The Ottoman Turks coming from the southeast provided the country 181 with its class of craftsmen and tradesmen. This mosaic of races and peoples developed a particularly powerful and healthy stock of people whose high life expectancy is well known, as well as a temperate, 531 industrious, and sober character. It mirrors a corresponding multiplicity 177 of cultures; thus we have in art types that range from the Scythian style and its predilection for phantastic animal forms to the Byzantine and ancient Oriental motifs; from the cellular stone inlays of the period of the Teutonic migrations (belt clasps) to the Tatar decorative pendants (Figures 2, 3, and 7),[1] and from the Slavic joy in ornamentation and 592 colors to the Turkish, recent Near Eastern household industries. The Slavic household community, which takes up every new generation into the fabric of the family, has as its consequence the form of settlement 342 by individual and separate farmsteads. Aside from occasional underground dwelling pits in the loess, of which only the pointed roof of rushes rises above the ground, there are one-story high, rectangular panel-work houses covered with loam, placed either on a level with the soil, or else on top of a wooden substructure for the working sheds.

[1] [For illustrations, see 1: Karutz, E1 Europe, cat. 116, p. 59a -- Analyst]
[2] [See 1: Karutz, E1 Europe, cat. 116, p. 57a -- Analyst]